

Message Text

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ACTION NEA-10

INFO OCT-01 EUR-08 ISO-00 IO-04 PM-03 L-01 NSC-05 CIAE-00

DODE-00 INR-05 NSAE-00 PA-01 RSC-01 USIA-06 PRS-01

SP-02 SAM-01 CIEP-01 OMB-01 SCCT-01 EB-04 AF-04 /060 W

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R 011429Z NOV 74

FM AMEMBASSY DAMASCUS

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 1847

INFO USINT ALGIERS

AMEMBASSY AMMAN

AMEMBASSY BEIRUT

AMEMBASSY CAIRO

AMEMBASSY JIDDA

AMEMBASSY KUWAIT

AMEMBASSY LONDON

AMEMBASSY MOSCOW

AMEMBASSY PARIS

AMEMBASSY RABAT

AMEMBASSY ROME

AMEMBASSY TEL AVIV

AMEMBASSY TUNIS

USUN NEW YORK 105

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BEIRUT PASS BAGHDAD

EO 11652: N/A

TAGS: PFRO, SY

SUBJECT: SYRIAN PRESS COVERAGE OF RABAT SUMMIT: OCT 26-NOV 1

1. SYRIAN NEWS MEDIA HAVE GIVEN BROAD AND EXTENSIVE
COVERAGE TO RABAT SUMMIT. REPORTING, HOWEVER, HAS
BEEN CHARACTERIZED BY FACTUAL ACCOUNT OF PROCEEDINGS
WITH NO EDITORIALS OR COMMENTARIES. MAJOR EMPHASIS
HAS BEEN PLACED ON SYRIA'S PRIMARY ROLE IN ACHIEVING

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ARAB CONSENSUS ON PLO SOLE REPRESENTATION FOR PALESTINIANS.
AT SAME TIME LOCAL NEWS MEDIA HAVE STRESSED SYRIAN

INSISTENCE ON ARAB "SOLIDARITY AT THIS CRITICAL JUNCTURE."

2. NOT SURPRISINGLY, PRESIDENT ASAD'S SPEECH ON OCTOBER 30 WAS HIGHLIGHTED WITH EMPHASIS ON SYRIA'S COMMITMENT TO "STRUGGLE TO REALIZE FREEDOM FOR THE ARABS AS WELL AS ALL PEOPLES ON EARTH." AT THE SAME TIME THE PRESIDENT WAS QUOTED AS ASSERTING THAT "WE LOOK FOR PEACE AND WE DO NOT WISH TO SEE THE DEATH OF ANYONE."

3. COVERAGE SINCE SUMMIT CONTINUES TO BE HANDLED IN STRAIGHT-FORWARD FASHION, BUT ALSO WITH CONTINUED EDITORIAL SILENCE ON THE IMPLICATIONS OF RABAT CONFERENCE DECISIONS. IN THIS CONNECTION IT IS INTERESTING THAT THE LOCAL NEWS MEDIA HAVE CARRIED NO REPORTS OF EITHER KING HUSSEIN'S SPEECH MADE AFTER HIS RETURN TO AMMAN OR ARAFAT'S PRESS CONFERENCE FOLLOWING THE CLOSE OF THE CONFERENCE.

4. LOCAL POPULAR REACTION SEEMS TO BE ONE OF SATISFACTION BUT AT SAME TIME OF QUESTIONING AS TO WHAT HAPPENS NEXT. SOME EMBASSY CONTACTS HAVE COMMENTED SARCASTICALLY THAT THE MONEY WHICH SYRIA WILL NOW BE GETTING FROM ITS OIL-RICH ARAB BRETHREN WILL EVENTUALLY END UP IN SOVIET COFFERS. BEYOND THAT FEW PEOPLE ARE AS YET WILLING OR ABLE TO COMMENT ON WHAT RABAT CONFERENCE DECISIONS WILL MEAN FOR EITHER SYRIA OR THE ARAB WORLD.

5. COMMENT: LACK OF EDITORIAL COMMENT DOUBTLESS RESULTS FROM ABSENCE OF ANYONE BACK HERE AT RANCH WHO HAD AUTHORITY TO EXPRESS OPINION.
MURPHY

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